

# Exhibit 1

January 4, 2024

The Honorable Richard M. Gergel  
U.S. District Judge  
District of South Carolina  
83 Meeting Street  
Charleston, S.C. 29401

Re: Apology Letter of Jonathan Ramaci

Dear Judge Gergel:

I first want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present you with a sincere letter of apology for the two charges for which I have, without question, admitted responsibility. These transgressions are namely, providing incorrect information in connection with an EIDL Loan for \$149,900 and the filing of a false tax return in 2021 that resulted in the underpayment of \$24,300 in Federal Taxes.

I would imagine, and could be mistaken, that your Honor receives many letters of apology and must assess whether or not the individual writing the letter is sincere and truly apologetic in their acceptance of responsibility. It is for this reason that this letter may be longer than most but I feel it important to convey the drivers behind my apology so that the Court may judge the sincerity of my apology and acceptance of my offenses against the government I served and continue to serve, support and believe in.

As a young man, after graduating from The Citadel, I was commissioned an Officer in the US Army and swore an allegiance to uphold the traditions, values and laws of our nation. I served the United States with honor, heroism and valor and was recognized for the same. Nothing of note that I did in my service was to gain an award or medal, and I don't believe that any of my brothers-in-arms do anything positive for our nation for these reasons. The things I did were a result of my upbringing, my enshrined belief system and my sense of doing the right thing when presented with an opportunity to do so. As you may have already read, this dedication, core belief system and character traits which I thank others for instilling in me, has led to situations where I have "left it all on the field." Some thirty years after my service, I continue to pay the price as a result of the physical and psychological damage incurred during my service. Given the opportunity, I would do it all over again for this nation.

I am also very proud of my family's history of service pre- and post-migration to the United States from Italy. My great-grandfather served as an officer in the "Guardia di Finanza" of Italy. This is the military financial police of the country. He was killed in service to this institution and for his heroism and sacrifice has the barracks of the financial police as well as one of their ships named after our family. Although I never met my great-grandfather, this has been a point of pride for me and my family and something I have shared with my children. We have had the opportunity to visit the barracks named after our family and have seen it as something to guide our character and behavior in life. I share this with the Court as I am beyond remorse and shame in having violated such a legacy in having someone with the same family name, me, admitting to offenses of a financial nature. This is in contrast to everything my ancestors have stood for and I can never forgive myself for soiling my family name in such a way as I have. For this reason, I deeply apologize and have committed myself to use my remaining years and God-given talents to make amends for this transgression.

Along the same lines, my father served the United States valiantly in the Korean War and lost his leg in Korea as a young man. He was a loving but demanding man who instilled what today may be called “old-school” values in his children. These values include service to others, always tell the truth, do the right thing and honor God. I lost my father some years ago and feel I have dishonored him by my actions as well. Again, my only path forward is to do all I can to overcome my failings and restore honor to his memory and the years he invested in me to do what is right.

I also owe it to my children to give them a name which is not affiliated with someone who has only transgressed the law but has done something wrong, admitted to it and has come out on the other side with a stronger resolve to live life correctly and to not just meet the standards of a good citizen but to exceed them in glowing fashion.

Prior to my arrest, I have lived for 58 years within the norms of the law and with a passion for serving others. As a young man, I was presented with a decision to pursue one of two engrained desires for my life’s road; one was to become a priest and the other to attend the Citadel and serve my nation. I chose the latter after a great deal of reflection and soul searching. I share this with the Court as my drivers in life have had very little to do with personal monetary gain but much more with the service of others and the personal joy and feeding of my soul that I receive in helping other people either through the things I do or the products I produce that are aimed at making people’s lives better.

Since my arrest and the writing of this letter, I have had 752 days to reflect upon my transgressions, how I got to where I am, what may have led me to do what I did and how to do 200% better in the future. I am a firm believer that without reflection and an understanding of how I got in this situation, both my apology to this Court and my propensity to never repeat such an action would be insincere and meaningless.

There has not been one day in the past 752 days that I have not felt shame, regret, and embarrassment for the pain I have caused my family for my failings. I also have reflected on how I could have offended the nation I have served.

As Benjamin Franklin said, “never ruin an apology with an excuse.” I am not writing to provide an excuse for any of my actions in any manner whatsoever as I take complete and undiluted responsibility for my actions. In the effort to best judge the sincerity of my apology, I do feel it is important to provide some context as this apology and coupled sincerity has been forged with the hottest of flames.

This experience has been nearly unbearable for my family and me. We had our home surrounded and were all taken out of our home with ~25 automatic weapons trained on us. We lost our housing, were barely able to find replacement housing, have had two businesses practically destroyed, have had horrible and untrue statements made about us, etc. These are the fires which have pushed the daily and deep reflection on what my actions have caused and the sincerity of my apology to this Court.

The one tax and one EIDL offenses both occurred during the pandemic. As it may seem something we all want to forget, it was a period of heightened stress, anxiety, isolation and fear. The economy was collapsing, my children were home schooled and isolated, we were isolated and 3,000 people were dying per day.

As to the EIDL loan for \$149,900, I had poured myself for the prior six years into a project called Wellnest which was doing very well, had developed working prototypes under budget and was on the path to commercialization. This product and service, had it made it to market, would have positively changed the lives of seniors in receiving care and security in their golden years. It also would have provided much needed assistance to their loved ones who are so involved in the care of aging parents.

When COVID hit, it was truly a death knell for new ventures such as Wellnest. Funding dried up, customers who expressed interest in bringing the product to market became laser focused on mitigating the effects of COVID, and the Wellnest ship that was previously doing very well was sinking. I was under immense pressure from shareholders to whom I felt a huge responsibility, employees and a Board of Directors adamantly pushing me for results. One of our Board members who also acted at times as our corporate attorney, Craig Lebamoff, suggested, guided and encouraged me to apply for an EIDL for the Company. Again, this is not an excuse but a personal reflection which informed my state of mind and also serves as a personal understanding of decision minefields that I have burned into my brain as a preventive lesson for the future. I would like the Court to know that when the loan payments became due and the Company still had no money, I started to make the payments out of my personal funds.

A similar personal understanding has been gained through my own self-reflection on why I understated my 2021 income by \$24,300. I was trying to keep my family fed and afloat during a very difficult period.

In both situations, I take full responsibility and apologize to your Honor and the government we both serve. No one forced me at gunpoint to sign my name on the two documents to which I have admitted wrongdoing; I did that on my own.

I also violated an axiom that I have held precious throughout my adult life and have passed down to my children – “integrity is what you do when no one is watching.” I apologize to you for violating this core value and the law.

As actions speak louder than words, I have already rededicated myself through many acts to atone for my offenses in a sincere demonstration of my apology and remorse. These acts include community- based volunteerism and the giving of my time and talents to multiple organizations to assist with the development of solutions for paralysis, early detection of traumatic brain injury and the prevention of opioid abuse in pain management.

Sincerely,

Jonathan E. Ramaci  
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